The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news summary on matters of verbal interpretations of matters affecting labor according to the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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Give to the Red Cross

WHOLE NO. 1827 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 1946 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 26, NO. 16

Smashing Victory Scored By AFL As Senate Votes Long-Range Housing

Prevailing Wage Provision Is Accepted For All FHA-Financed Construction

Washington, D. C.—The American Federation of Labor scored a smashing legislative victory when the Senate adopted the long-range Wagner-Ellender-Taft Housing Bill, including an amendment requiring the payment of prevailing wages on FHA-financed construction.

This key AFL amendment, introduced by Senator Murdock, of Utah, was approved by a 53-to-30 vote even though two of the bill's sponsors, Senators Ellender and Taft, opposed it. Supporting the amendment, Senate Majority Leader Barkley declared it should be a government policy to require the prevailing wage on all construction aided by the government. A similar requirement has been in effect for years on public housing.

After the amendment was approved, the bill as a whole was adopted by a voice vote and sent to the House for consideration.

It provides for slum clearance, low cost government housing, and government encouragement to private enterprise to build 15,000,000 new rural and city homes in the next 10 years.

The bill establishes a national policy "that every American family shall have a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family," and creates a permanent single national housing agency.

The national housing administrator is directed to make an annual report to Congress on an inventory of the needs and programs in housing and related community development.

For slum clearance and low-rent housing projects the bill calls for a government expenditure of $38,000,000 for the first year. After the first 5 years, the annual cost would be $140,000,000.

Loan programs are liberalized to encourage private enterprise to build homes for what was described as the "middle class" third of American families. FHA under this bill would insure 95 percent of the building cost of a home, instead of the present 90 percent. A person desiring to build a $5,000 home would, for example, be required to put down only $250 as a cash payment.

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Say, Listen!

Forthcoming radio programs in the "Cross Section—AFL" series broadcast each Saturday at 5:45 p.m., Eastern Time, over the nation-wide Columbia Broadcasting System, are listed below for the information of trade unionists everywhere so that they can make advance plans to tune in:

April 20—Government Employes. Leo George, president of the National Federation of Post Office Clerks; Bernice Heffner, secretary of the American Federation of Government Employes; and Jerome J. Keating, assistant secretary of the National Letter Carriers Association, will be interviewed by CBS Commentator Dwight Cook from the executive council room in AFL headquarters in Washington, D. C.

April 27—Coal Mining. Members of the United Mine Workers of America will be interviewed from a mine of the Truax Traer Coal Co. at Kayford, W. Va.

May 4—Printing Trades. John B. Haggerty, president of the International Allied Printing Trades Association, and Ralph E. Heilbroner, secretary of the union employers of the Printing Industry of America, will talk from a printing plant in Washington, D. C.

CROSS SECTION--AFL

No. 1—Building Trades

Featuring Howard McSpeden, president of the New York City Building and Construction Trades Council; Peter W. Eller, president of the New York City Building Trades Employers Association; and Alan Sayre of the Thompson-Starrett Construction Co., and Bill Downs, CBS commentator, who interviewed them from Mr. Speden's office.

How labor-management troubles were solved and model relationships established in New York City's building and construction industry was explained in the first of a series of AFL's new radio series, entitled "Cross Section—AFL," over the Columbia Broadcasting System.

This was accomplished through the negotiation of a 5-year master agreement between the council and the employers' association—a contract boosting wages 15 per cent to the highest levels in the nation and banning strikes for any cause during its duration. Mr. Speden pointed out that the contract gives the workers six paid holidays during the year. Eller said, from the employers' point of view, that the contract provides five years of stabilized labor conditions. All disputes that arise under the contract are to be settled by a joint arbitration board.

With the new agreement now in effect, a tremendous building drive is now all set to get under way in the New York area as soon as materials become available, the labor and industry representatives declared.

Asked whether prefabricated housing will take the place of old-type homes, Eller said:

"You just remember that the ordinary man buys one house in a lifetime. It's a permanent thing with him. In this emergency perhaps we should be stopgap structures that may serve temporarily, but a man wants the best. I think you will find America always has built the best and most beautiful houses in the world. I don't believe that we want to stop building them."

McSpeden emphasized that besides building there is a lot of tearing down to do." He urged immediate replacement of tenement and slum districts in the cities.

"There is enough work ahead of us in the next 10 years to afford